

## Message Text

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ACTION AF-04

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O 101640Z NOV 75

FM AMEMBASSY GABORONE

TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 7262

INFO AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LOURENCO MARQUES

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MASERU

AMEMBASSY MBABANE

C O N F I D E N T I A L GABORONE 1549

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, US, AO, BC

SUBJ: ANGOLAN RECOGNITION

REF: (A) STATE 265503 (NOTAL) (B) GABORONE 1307 (NOTAL)

1. CHARGE CALLED ON SECRETARY FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS TIBONE AT FIRST OPPORTUNITY (MINISTER FOR EXTERNAL AFFAIRS MOGWE WAS UNAVAILABLE) MORNING NOVEMBER 10 TO MAKE APPROACH REQUESTED REF A. CHARGE PASSED ON SUBSTANCE REF A HIGHLIGHTING PARA 4 AND PARA 7, AND EXPRESSED THE HOPE THAT BOTSWANA WOULD REFRAIN FROM HASTILY RECOGNIZING MPLA AS GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA AT TIME OF INDEPENDENCE.

2. TIBONE TOOK IN POINTS AND SAID HE WOULD BE SEEING PRESIDENT ALMOST IMMEDIATELY AND WOULD REPORT U.S. VIEWS AT THAT TIME. HE ADDED THAT HE WOULD BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS ANGOLAN ISSUES AFTER THAT MEETING.

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3. TIBONE CAME OUT OF EXTENDED MEETINGS AT 1730. HE THANKED CHARGE FOR INFORMATION PROVIDED EARLIER AND SAID THAT IT HAS BEEN USEFUL DURING DISCUSSIONS OF THE MATTER WITH THE PRESIDENT. HE SAID BOTSWANA'S INFORMATION ON THE ANGOLAN ISSUE IS VERY SKETCHY AND DEPENDS MAINLY ON THE PRESS. THEREFORE, INFORMATION ON RELATIVE STRENGTHS OF TWO SIDES HAD BEEN HELPFUL. HE SAID ANY ADDITIONAL INFORMATION ALONG THE SAME LINES WOULD BE USEFUL, PARTICULARLY, FOR EXAMPLE, ASSESSMENT BY U.S. CONSULATE STAFF RECENTLY EVACUATED FROM LUANDA OF LAST DAYS THERE.

4. ACCORDING TO TIBONE, THE GOVERNMENT OF BOTSWANA DOES NOT INTEND TO MAKE A HASTY DECISION ON THE QUESTION OF RECOGNITION OF A GOVERNMENT IN ANGOLA. HOWEVER, IT DOES REGARD THE MATTER AS URGENT AND IS SEEKING TO EXAMINE ALL POSSIBLE AVENUES TOWARD A SOLUTION. HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD PREFER A PROCEDURE WHICH WOULD ALLOW FOR A GOVERNMENT OF NATIONAL UNION AND SHUN THE THOUGHT OF A UDI ARRANGEMENT. A FACTOR WHICH COMPLICATES THEIR DECISION-MAKING, HOWEVER, IS THE PUBLICLY EXPRESSED POSITION OF MOZAMBIQUE. TIBONE NOTED THAT THE GOB HAD RECEIVED TODAY AN INVITATION FROM THE MPLA TO ATTEND INDEPENDENCE CEREMONIES TOMORROW IN LUANDA. HIS GOVERNMENT HAS DECIDED NOT TO ACCEPT, NOT ONLY BECAUSE OF PRACTICAL DIFFICULTIES BUT BECAUSE THEY HAD COME TO THE CONCLUSION THAT ATTENDANCE WOULD NOT BE IN THEIR BEST INTERESTS.

5. COMMENT: FROM TIBONE'S COMMENTS AND GOB'S PREVIOUSLY EXPRESSED CONCERNS REGARDING ANGOLA (REF B), IT APPEARS LIKELY THAT IT WOULD PREFER NOT TO RECOGNIZE MPLA AS GOVERNMENT OF ANGOLA. HOWEVER, CONTENDING REGIONAL PRESSURES ARE APPARENTLY BEING FELT AND FINAL DECISION CANNOT BE TAKEN FOR GRANTED. TIBONE SUGGESTED THAT HIS GOVERNMENT WOULD BE APPRECIATIVE OF INFORMATION ALONG THE LINES DESCRIBED IN PARA 3 ABOVE. THEREFORE, IN TERMS, OF CONTINUING THE DIALOGUE WITH THE GOB, RECOMMEND THAT WE CONTINUE TO BE PROVIDED WITH LATEST INFORMATION ON ANGOLA INCLUDING, IF POSSIBLE, ASSESSMENT FROM FORMER CONSULATE STAFF OF LAST DAYS IN LUANDA. TENTATIVE READOUT OF TRENDS AMONG OTHER AFRICAN GOVERNMENTS TOWARD QUESTION OF RECOGNITION MIGHT ALSO BE USEFUL.

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